

nion, Central States; Charles A. Callis, Southern States; John M. Knight, Western States; Joseph W. McMurrin, California; Brigham S. Young, Northwestern States; Rey L. Pratt, Mexico; Joseph Quinney, Jr., Canada; and Benjamin Goddard, Bureau of Information, Temple Block, Salt Lake City.

The Tabernacle was filled to capacity with people from all parts of the Church.

The choir and congregation sang, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet."

The invocation was offered by Elder Thomas N. Taylor, president of the Utah stake of Zion.

The choir and congregation sang, "Guide us, O thou great Jehovah."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

It certainly is a very inspiring sight to see this house full and people standing at this our first session of the conference.

THE CHURCH IN EXCELLENT CONDITION

I rejoice in the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at home and abroad. I rejoice in feeling that we have every cause to be grateful to the Lord for the blessings that have come to us during the past year. I believe that I am within the bounds of truth when I say that the Church was never in a better condition than at the present time, that there was never greater unity existing among the general authorities of the Church, more anxiety and determination to serve the Lord, than today; that we never had more energetic and faithful men presiding over the stakes of Zion and in the wards and missions of the Church than today; neither have we had more energetic, faithful men and women, than have been presiding and are presiding at the present time, as general, stake and ward officers in our various auxiliary organizations.

GOOD WORK BY THE AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

It fell to my lot, yesterday afternoon, to address the conference of the Relief Society for a few minutes. The Assembly Hall was filled to overflowing, and many people were standing. I am convinced that such a gathering as that of active, wide-awake, energetic women-members could not be witnessed among any other people, who are no more numerous than are the Latter-day Saints. Our Relief Societies are doing a very remarkable and wonderful work in looking after the sick and the afflicted. I remember one very good friend of mine, a non-member of the Church, said to his wife just before he passed away, so she told me, that no other people, in his estimation—and he had traveled nearly all over the world—took as good care of their sick and looked after their poor as well as do the Latter-day Saints. They are really one great family of brothers and sisters,

united with a common bond of love and respect. Our young people, and those who look after the children of the Primary Association are also doing a splendid work.

SATISFACTORY REPORTS FROM THE MISSIONS

The reports from our Missions from all over the world are very satisfactory; and the one call, claim, or plea that is made is, "Send us more missionaries." There is only one real exception to this, and that is in Japan. There is no exception in the call for more missionaries in that field, but, after twenty-odd years of labor in that country, we are convinced that not a dozen people have been thoroughly converted to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have seriously considered the question of closing that mission, but have not yet arrived at any conclusion.

ENLIGHTENING STATISTICS

It has been customary, at April conferences, to give some statistics to the people regarding the expenditure of their tithing. Nearly the entire tithing paid during the past year has been returned, in various appropriations, to the different stakes of Zion.

General —The amount returned to the stakes from the tithes, for stake and ward purposes, during the past year and for maintenance and operation of the same, has been (I shall not read the odd figures)		\$ 993,000
The amount expended for the maintenance and operation of Church schools has been		835,000
The amount expended for the construction, maintenance and operation of temples has been		449,000
Expended for hospital construction		146,000
Since our last General Conference our hospital in Idaho Falls, costing in the neighborhood of \$400,000 has been dedicated, and is open for the care of the afflicted.		
For Charity —For the care of the worthy poor and other charitable purposes, including hospital treatment.....		171,000
Missions —For the maintenance and operation of all the missions, and for the erection of places of worship and other buildings in the missions		586,000
The grand total —Taken from the tithes, and returned by the Trustee-in-Trust to the Saints for the maintenance and operation of the stakes and wards, for the maintenance and operation of Church schools, temples, charities, and for mission activities is		\$3,182,207.22
Other Charities —In addition to charities paid out of the tithes, as before stated, there have also been distributed the fast offerings and Relief Society and other charities, amounting to \$471,000 which, added to the \$171,000 paid from the tithes, makes a total of Church charities of \$643,060.47.		
Following statistics and other reports are compiled from the Church records for the year 1923:		
Church growth —Children blessed and entered upon the records of the Church, in the stakes and missions.....		19,199
Children baptized in the stakes and missions.....		13,020
Converts baptized and entered on the records of the stakes and missions		7,492

The organized stakes of Zion now number 90.

Wards and independent branches 972.

There are 24 mission of the Church.

There are branches in the missions, 635.

The birth-rate in the Church is 35 per 1000.

The marriage-rate is 14 per 1000. I think that ought to be increased.

The death-rate is 7.2, which is certainly very satisfactory indeed.

There are 157,990 persons in the Church who are married.

There were 241 persons divorced in the year 1923.

Families owning their own homes, 75%.

Temple Statistics—In 1918 and 1923—A comparison for the past

five years—Baptisms, five years ago.....	175,000; last year	393,000
Ordinances, five years ago.....	154,000; last year	442,000

Total ordinances in 1918.....	329,529; in 1923	836,053
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or an increase of more than 150%—over 500,000 more ordinances performed last year than five years ago.

Missionary statistics—On Foreign missions, from Stakes of Zion,

there are	1,798
Local elders laboring in foreign missions.....	83
Special missionaries laboring in the stakes of Zion.....	2,137

Total missionaries	4,018
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Stake Presidents—There have been appointed since last October the following Stake Presidents: Wayne H. Redd, San Juan stake. Henry M. Mickelsen, Lost River stake. M. Howard Randall, Morgan stake. James Berkley Larsen, Shelley stake. Winslow Farr Smith, Ensign stake. William H. Callahan, Wayne stake.

There have been new wards organized: In the Roosevelt Stake, Mountwel; in the Liberty stake, Yale; in the Los Angeles stake, Belvedere and Glendale.

TEXT FOR AN IMPORTANT SUBJECT

I am requested to read this announcement.

"Mendelssohn's oratorio entitled, **Elijah**, will be given this evening, Friday, in the Tabernacle, commencing at 8:15. In addition to the choir of two hundred and fifty voices selected from the Tabernacle Choir, ten talented soloists, and an orchestra of forty men, will take part. The committee announce popular prices of 25c and 50c. Tickets may be obtained at the box office and at the Bureau of Information. The choir and musicians have been preparing this splendid oratorio for many months, and a musical treat is promised to all who attend. Will you kindly emphasize the above, and oblige,

"Sincerely, **The Committee.**"

I have decided to emphasize it by devoting my talk, entirely, or practically so, to that subject. I had not made up my mind until this morning what I would talk about.

On the 21st day of September, 1823, nearly seven years before the organization of the Church, Moroni, an angel, made the following statement to Joseph Smith the Prophet:

"Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

"And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.